



Term 4 | 2016

Connecting Foster & Kinship Carers – SA Inc

CFC-SA is the peak body for foster and kinship carers in South Australia

Advocate

Support

Connect

Inform

Draft Children and Young People (Safety) Bill 2016 delivers on carers' legal rights

Connecting Foster Carers – SA Inc (CFC-SA) has been advocating strongly for the inclusion of **carers' rights to challenge decisions that affect them and the children in their care** within the child protection legislation. CFC-SA is thrilled to note that its advocacy efforts have been heard and this inclusion has been made in the draft Bill despite this recommendation being omitted by the Nyland Report. Under the proposal, the South Australian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (SACAT) will have the power to make binding decisions and carers will be able to appeal decisions of SACAT to the Supreme Court.

Other **big wins for carers** within the draft Bill include:

- ✓ easier access to Other Person Guardianship (OPG)
- ✓ entitlement to access information about a child upon placement
- ✓ involvement in court processes
- ✓ additional resources allocated towards foster and kinship care

CFC-SA is in the process of reviewing the draft Bill and preparing a response. It is likely CFC-SA will seek further changes allowing the Youth Court to join carers as parties to proceedings – to ensure this right is absolute and not discretionary.

The draft Bill is open for feedback until 27 January 2017 via Your Say website: <https://yoursay.sa.gov.au/decisions/yoursay-engagements-children-and-young-people-safety-bill-2016/about>

CONTACT US

support@cfc-sa.org.au

Freecall 1800 732 272

PO Box 2052
Prospect SA 5082



CFC-SA Services for foster and kinship carers

Would you like to **connect** with other foster and kinship carers?
Do you have questions or need **information** about your caring role?
Are there times when you would like help to **advocate** for change?
Could you use **support** and benefit from discussing issues with a peer?

CFC-SA's freecall phone 1800 732 272 and email: support@cfc-sa.org.au are available to all carers in South Australia. CFC-SA aims to connect families to resources, identify appropriate support options and share caring experiences. Your calls and emails also mean CFC-SA can identify current and ongoing issues and can do better and do more to represent foster and kinship carers across various forums and networks.

Did you know ...

... 3,321 children were
in out of home care as
at 31/10/2016

... 1,288 children were
living with foster care
families

... 1,473 children were
living with kinship care
families

... Foster and kinship
carer families are
providing homes for
83% of children in out
of home care

General Meeting, with special guest speaker Cathy Taylor

CFC-SA hosted a General Meeting on 6 December 2016 and invited members to come along and hear from the new Chief Executive of the Department for Child Protection, Cathy Taylor. Cathy acknowledged the “hearts and homes” that foster and kinship families provide and assured the audience she views carers as “a critical part of the care team”.

Cathy spoke of the great amount of work ahead across many elements of the system, and acknowledged **the priority for all is for the children and young people**.

Carers had the opportunity to ask a few questions, including:

- Timeliness around Department responses in actioning supports for children’s needs and removing delays for day to day decisions; and
- What it means to transfer responsibility from the Minister to the Chief Executive – and the impacts for carers.

Cathy reinforced the communication pathways for carers should begin at the local level and has welcomed further questions and examples of good practices from foster and kinship carers. Questions and examples may be emailed to support@cfc-sa.org.au to be passed on to Cathy.

CFC-SA will be planning a longer forum for carers to meet with Cathy early in 2017. Sign up as a CFC-SA member (see below) to ensure you receive information about this event.

Recharge 2016

CFC-SA’s annual Recharge event was held in September, with over 130 attendees braving the terrible weather to hear keynote speaker Fay Jackson share her personal mental health experiences and offer tips on self-care. This event was well attended by foster and kinship carer families, Families SA staff and Agency support workers and planning is already underway for this event in 2017.

Membership

CFC-SA welcomes new members and offers opportunities for carers and other interested persons to:

- receive invitations to *special events
- be notified of developments occurring across the sector
- share views, ideas and suggestions
- contribute to the future of CFC-SA

Membership is free and you can join us online at www.cfc-sa.org.au or by calling our Freecall number 1800 732 272.

***Upcoming member event for families will be held at the Gepps Cross Drive In on Saturday, 14 January 2017 to see Red Dog: True Blue. Further information will be sent to members via email shortly.**



We wish you every happiness this holiday season and throughout the New Year!

From all of us at CFC-SA

THANK YOU to the Department for Child Protection (DCP) for distribution of this newsletter to all registered carers